**Card Sort: Function of School Avoidance**

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| This card sort activity, based on a School Refusal Assessment Scale developed by Kearney (2002), has been devised by Sheffield EPS as a tool to support staff to develop a greater understanding of a young person’s school avoidance. The 24 statements are colour-coded by the function of behaviour identified by Kearney and Silverman (1990). By asking a CYP to sort the statements or by talking about each one, mentors may find that using the cards can support an understanding of the function of the school avoidance behaviour.\**This is a particulalry useful resource for children who find it diifcult to speak about their difficulties* |

Instructions for card sort activity

Blue, Function 1: To avoid something or situations that elicits feelings or high levels of stress or anxiety EG fear the toilet all together in the corridors between classes tests exams

Red, Function 2: To escape difficult social situations (e.e, feeling left out at playtime , reading out loud in class or other public speaking/group task, working as part of a group

Green, Function 3: To get attention from or spend more time with significant others at home (e.g. change in family dynamic, concerned about the wellbeing of parent)

Yellow, Function 4: To spend more time out of school as it is more fun or stimulating (e,g, watch TV, go shopping, play computer games, hang out with friends)

How the statements could be used with a pupil:

• Cut up the statements

• Ask the pupil to sort the statements into three groups, shown on the white cards:

• Using the key;

* Least like me
* A bit like me
* Most like me

consider if any patterns are noticeable and whether some functions are more prevalent than others

• If the pupil is comfortable, discuss the statements to help build a richer picture Consider together how this information can help to plan the next step

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| **If I had less bad feelings (e.g. scared, nervous, sad) about school, it would be easier for me to go to school** | **If it were easier for me to make new friends, it would be easier for me to go to school** |
| **It would be easier for me to go to school if my parents went with me** | **It would be easier for me to go to school if I could do more things I like to do more things I like to do after school hours (e.g. being with friends)** |
| **I have bad feelings about school (e.g. scared, nervous, sad) compared to other kids of my age** | **I often stay away from people in school compared to other kids of my age** |
| **I would like to be home with my parents more than other kids my age would** | **I would rather be doing fun things outside of school more than most kids of my age** |
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